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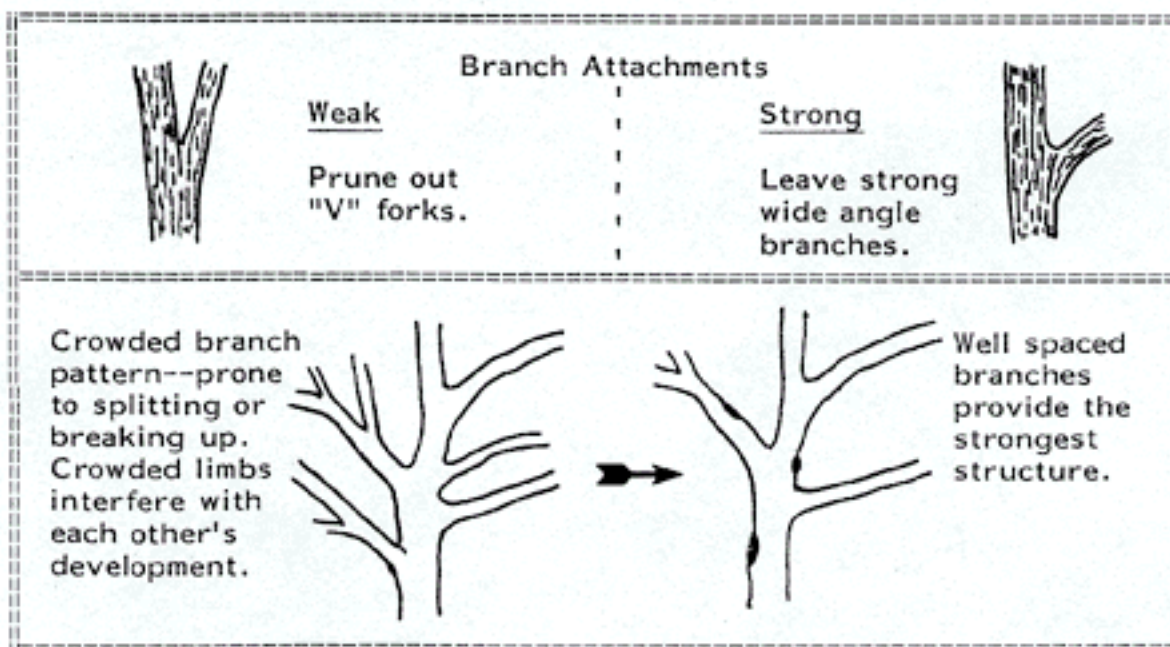
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## PRUNING SHADE TREES

The first rule in pruning should be: Do no cutting without a reason. There are, however, many good reasons for removing branches. A few are listed:

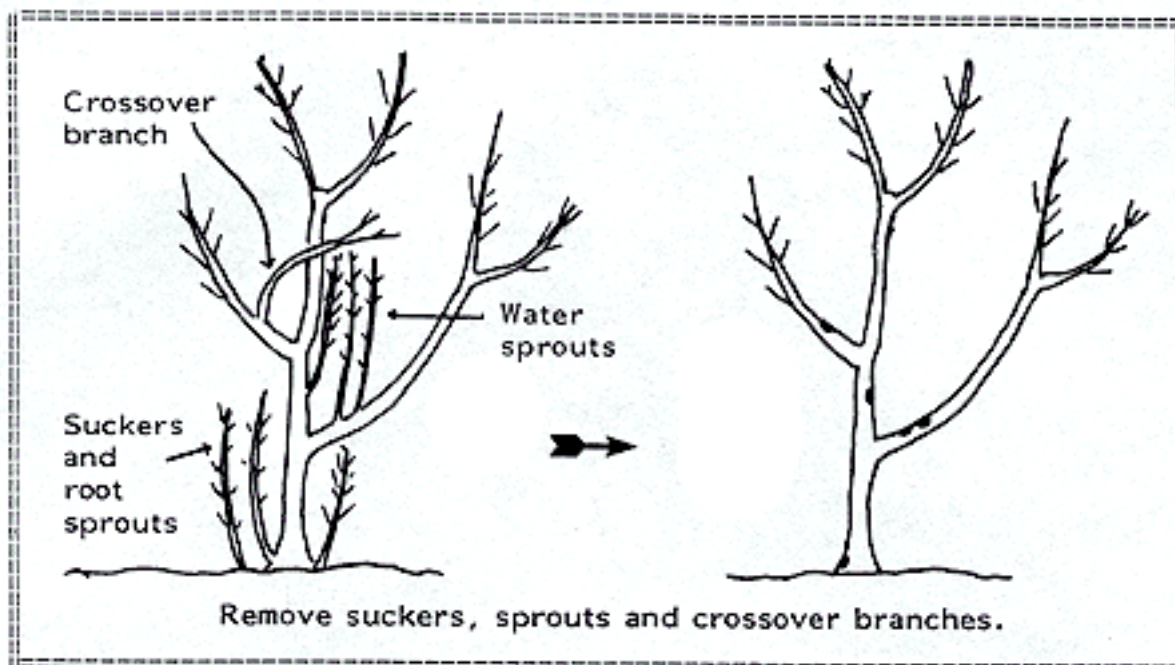
### REASONS FOR PRUNING

1. Convenience - removal of branches rubbing on house, roof or gutter.
2. Safety - the removal of dead, dying or weakened branches to prevent their damaging people or property.
3. Sanitation - removing insect- and disease-infested branches as well as opening up the crown for air movement and sunlight.
4. Appearance - occasional shaping to bring a tree into its characteristic form or to balance an odd-shaped crown. The practice is sometimes desirable for young trees.
5. Structural improvements - removal of narrow "V" forks, crossover branches, suckers and sprouts, and thinning of over-crowded areas increases the strength of the tree and makes it less prone to wind damage and decay.





## Pruning Shade Trees--continued



Remember, removing live limbs is a dwarfing process, and therefore a heavily pruned tree will never be as large as an unpruned tree. Heavy cutting to increase vigor is never a desirable substitute for fertilizing, watering and other good cultural practices.

### TIME OF YEAR TO PRUNE

Pruning can be done at anytime of year. In general, the best time to prune most plants is during late winter or early spring prior to beginning of growth. The least desirable time is immediately after new growth has developed in spring. It is also advisable to limit the amount of pruning done in late summer (August and September) because valuable food reserves are removed.

### WHERE TO CUT

The most common pruning mistake made by homeowners is using improper pruning techniques. Whether large or small branches are to be removed, all final cuts should be made at the branch collar.

The bark of a branch is usually marked by a swelling, or "collar," where it joins the trunk or large limb. The final cut should be made at the point where the swelling, or collar, begins. Care should be taken not to leave a stub on the tree as this is an excellent port of entry for decay. (Some sources recommend that when a branch larger than one inch diameter is cut, a wound dressing be applied. However, research indicates that such dressings do not promote healing and do not prevent decay. A dressing may be applied for cosmetic purposes--that is, so that the wound will not be so visible.)

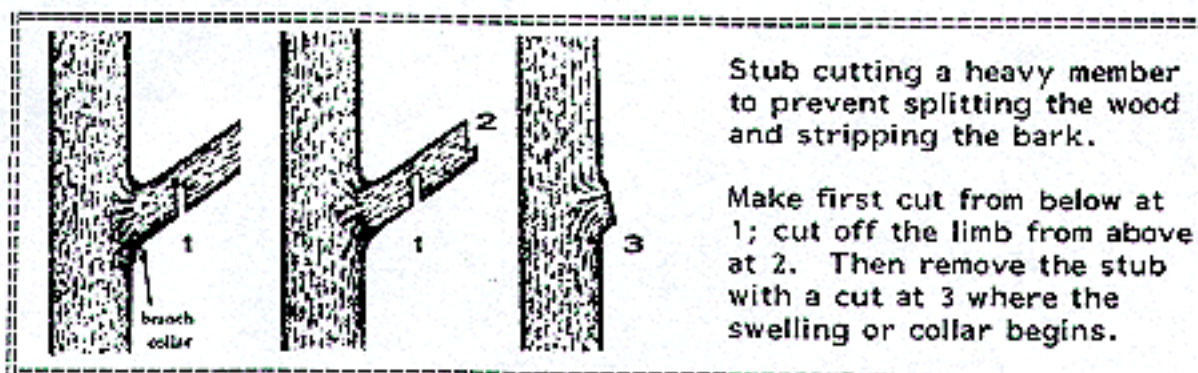
### HOW TO PRUNE

Pruning large branches can result in damage if improper techniques are used. Large wounds can be accidentally formed if a heavy branch being



## Pruning Shade Trees--continued

removed is allowed to strip the bark as it falls from the tree. This damage can be prevented by making multiple cuts as shown below:



### WHEN TO PRUNE

JANUARY,  
FEBRUARY OR  
MARCH

1. Prune shade trees and fruit trees, removing dead-wood and interfering branches. Shape fruit trees for support as well as for production.
2. Now is a good time to remove dead or undesirable trees, with as little damage as possible to lawns and gardens.

APRIL,  
MAY OR  
JUNE

1. Prune flowering trees and shrubs as soon as possible after blooming in order to preserve the blossoms for next year.
2. Thin out fruit where two are touching to prevent their collecting moisture at the point of contact and causing possible rot.

JULY,  
AUGUST OR  
SEPTEMBER

1. Prune evergreens and hedges now to allow them to develop new growth for winter protection.
2. Thin shade trees by pruning away interfering branches. Do vista work now while leaves are still alive.

OCTOBER,  
NOVEMBER OR  
DECEMBER

1. As leaves just begin to change color, prune out weak branches that have a premature leaf fall to prevent their showing up as dead branches next spring.
2. With burlap, cover delicate evergreens and other specimens that will be exposed to wintry blasts.

### CORRECTING STORM DAMAGE

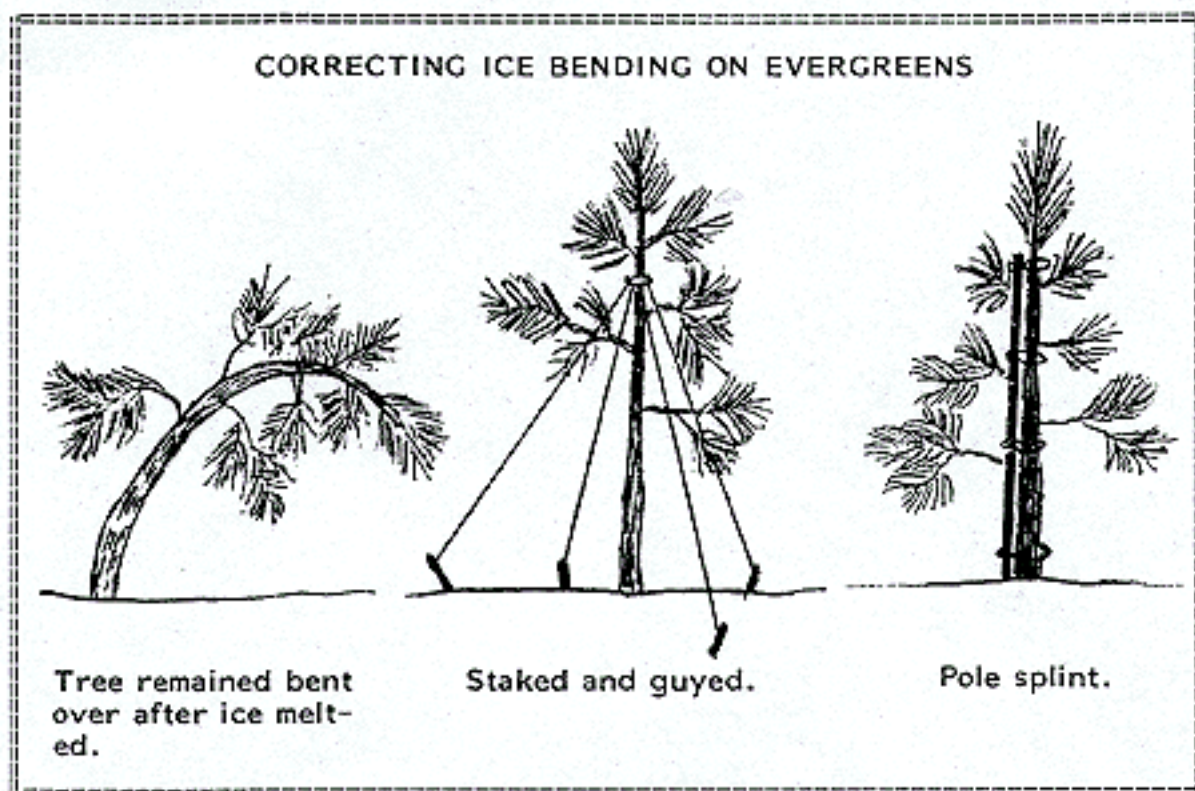
Limbs and branches of trees can be split, cracked or broken from high winds and heavy loads of ice or water on the foliage. Damaged limbs should be removed as soon as possible.

On pines and other conical shaped evergreens, the trunk may become bent under the weight of ice. Do not try to straighten a bent trunk while the ice is still present or temperatures are below freezing. Wait for a warm day and either straighten the tree with stakes and guy lines or splint the tree with a pole.



## Pruning Shade Trees--continued

It may be necessary to leave the splint or guy ropes on the tree for a year to insure recovery. Periodically check any ties on the tree to prevent their cutting into the bark.



Frost damage or freeze damage is different from ice breakage. Freeze damage is the killing of a portion or all of a tree by extreme cold. This usually occurs only to tropical or semi-tropical exotics that are not cold hardy. Some examples are most varieties of citrus, certain palms, camphor tree and golden raintree.

Do not try to correct freeze damage until spring when all chance of frost is past. When the tree begins to sprout, the extent of damage will become apparent and then pruning of dead portions can be done better.

